

# HEROES

CHAPTER 155

## PRODIGALS

Part 3 of 3

## PARCHED

After chasing Eli(s) through Cape Town, Tracy's finally cornered Eli-Prime at a diamond mine on the outskirts of the city. But just when she thinks he has nowhere left to run, hundreds of Elis – wielding pick axes and shovels – emerge from the mine.



# PRODIGALS PART THREE: **PARCHED**

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IT'S NOT THE FIRST TIME A  
GUY WITH A CUTE ACCENT'S  
GOTTEN ME INTO TROUBLE...





...BUT IT MIGHT BE THE MOST FUN.

BEAUTIFUL...



THUNK

THUNK

THUNK



ELI'S COPIES AREN'T REALLY ALIVE -- THEY JUST VANISH WHEN THEY DIE. IF THERE'S SUCH THING AS A SOUL, THEY DON'T HAVE ONE.



WHICH MEANS THAT, FOR THE FIRST TIME IN MY BELTWAY INSIDER LIFE...

SPLISH



I CAN REALLY...

CUT...

LOOSE!



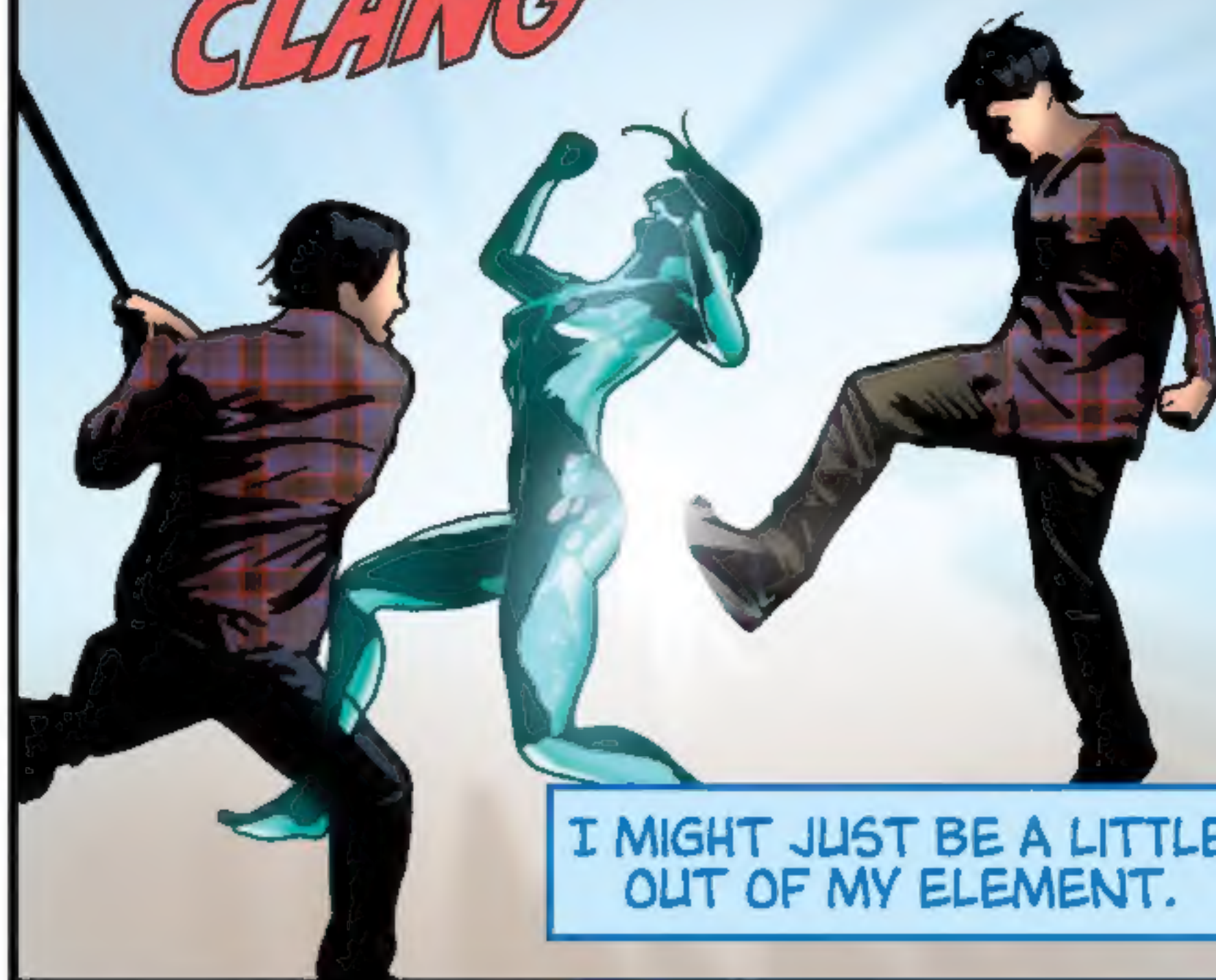




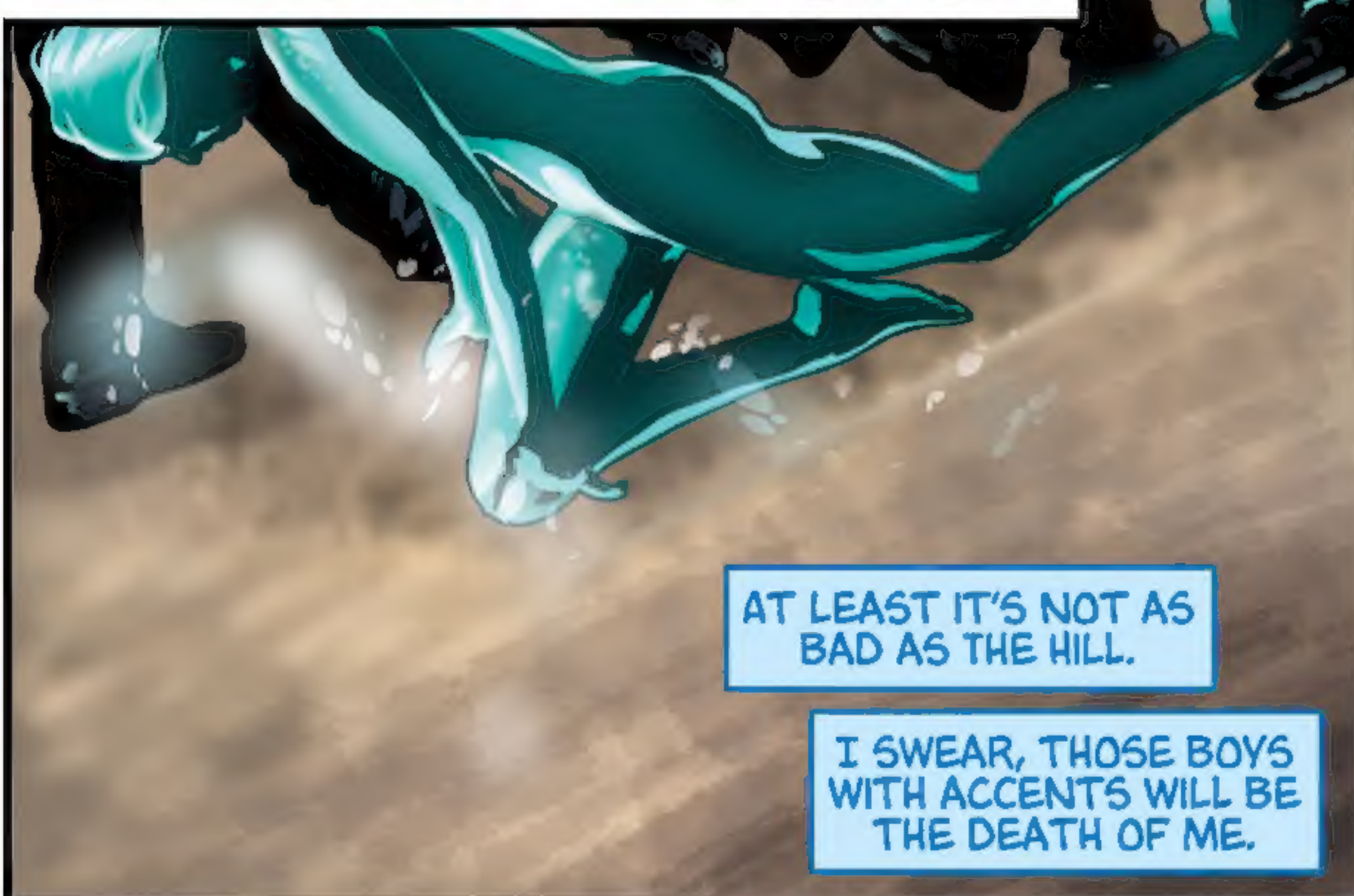
TOO HOT. TOO DRY. BEEN  
FIGHTING... TOO LONG.



**CLANG**



I MIGHT JUST BE A LITTLE  
OUT OF MY ELEMENT.



AT LEAST IT'S NOT AS  
BAD AS THE HILL.

I SWEAR, THOSE BOYS  
WITH ACCENTS WILL BE  
THE DEATH OF ME.

OH... HI THERE, LITTLE GUY.  
CARE TO COME OUT AND PLAY?



WHAT'S--

--THAT?

**RUMMMMMMMBLE**





YOU HAVEN'T  
MADE THIS EASY, ELI.  
BUT I PROMISED SAMUEL  
I'D BRING YOU HOME. AND  
I PROMISED MYSELF I'D  
STOP BREAKING  
PROMISES --



WAIT...  
SAMUEL'S  
IN--

--CHARGE  
NOW?



**SNAP**

WHY DIDN'T  
YOU SAY SO  
ON THE DAMN  
BOAT?





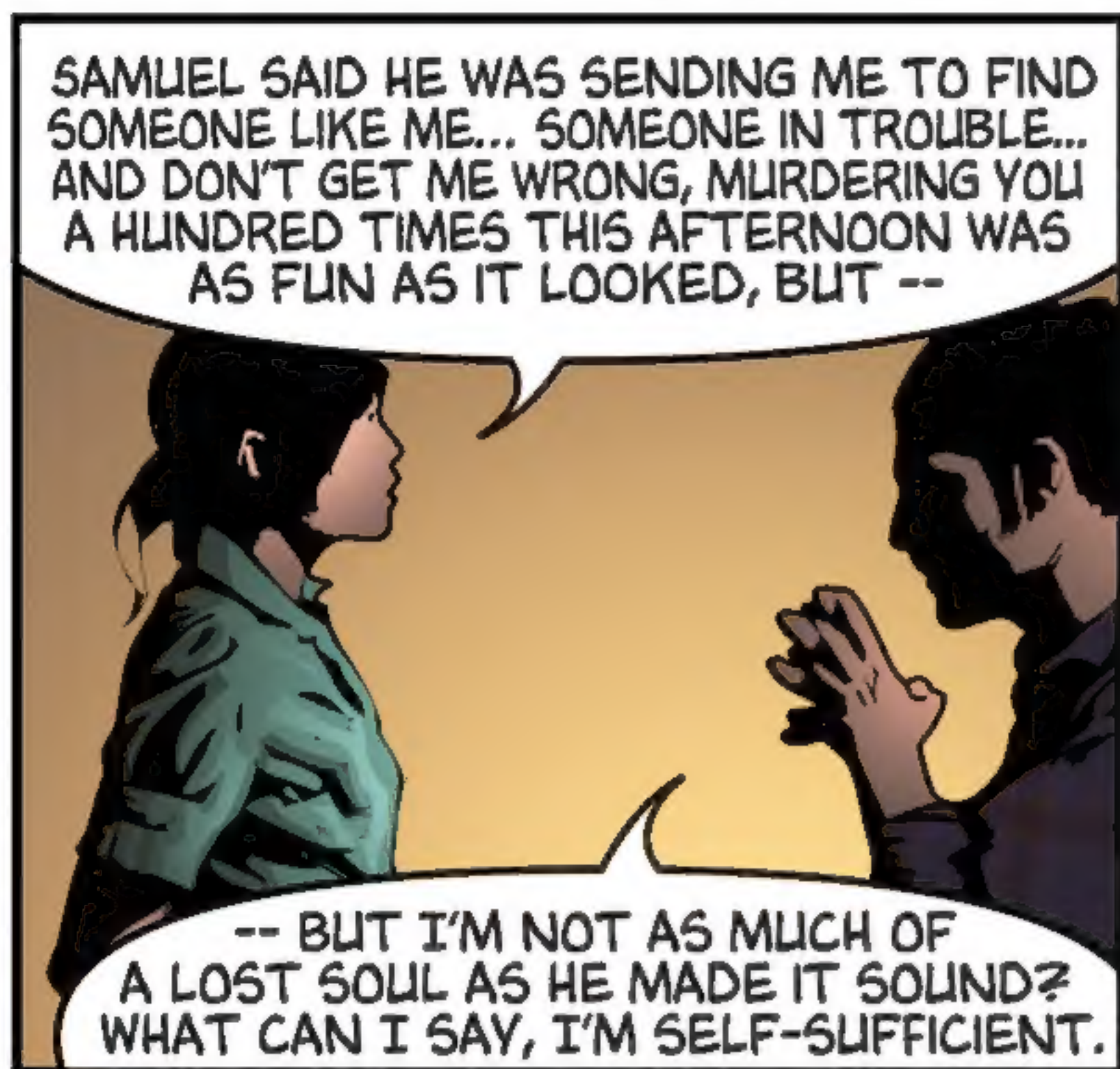
JOSEPH'S THE ONE WHO SENT ME INTO EXILE. BUT SAMUEL? WE USUALLY SAW EYE-TO-EYE.



WELL, SAM'S THE MAN NOW, AND THE MAN WANTS YOU BACK.

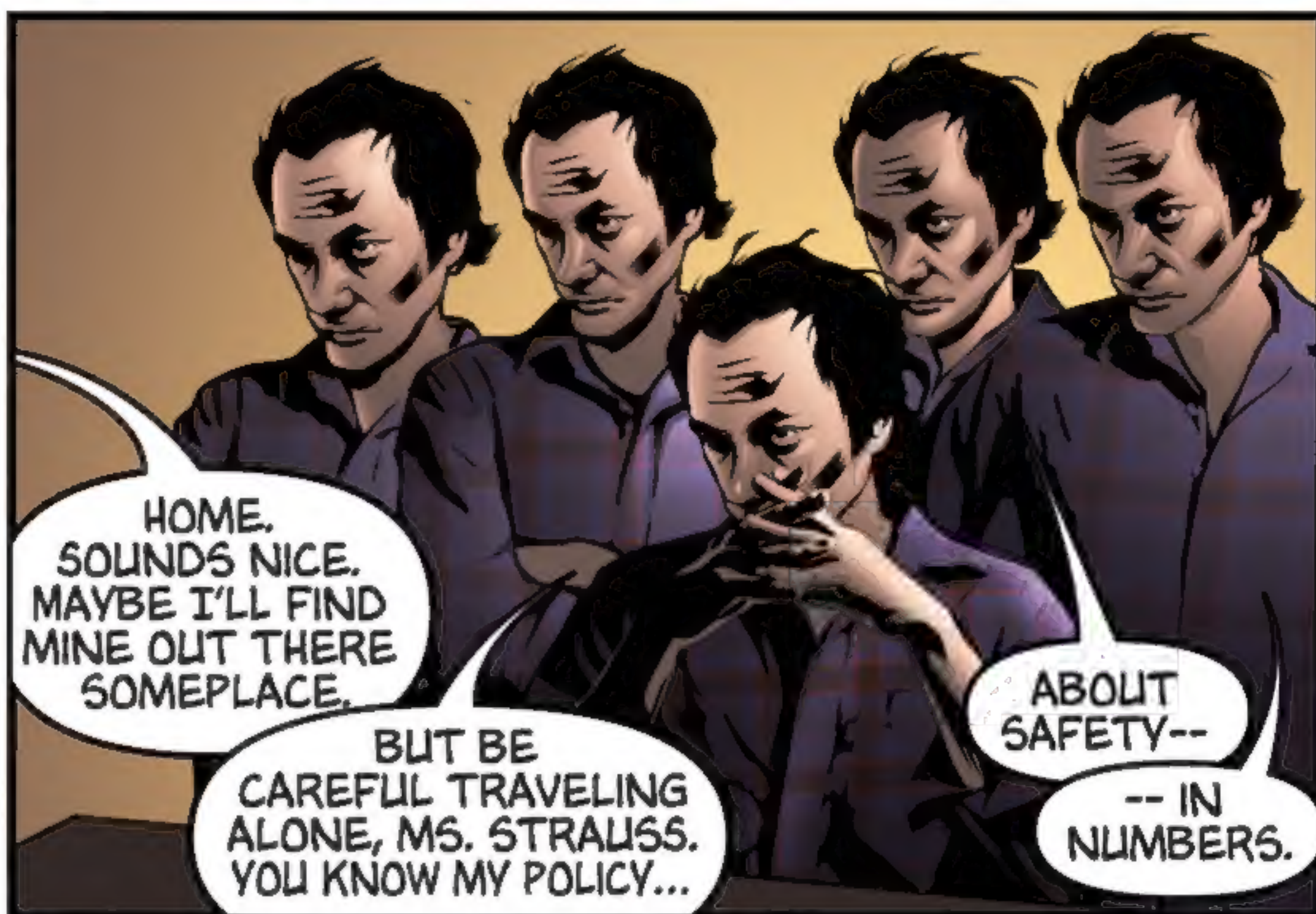
BEEN A LONG TIME SINCE I WAS HOME. WHEN DO WE LEAVE?

ACTUALLY, I THINK YOU'RE GOING SOLO ON THIS ONE.



SAMUEL SAID HE WAS SENDING ME TO FIND SOMEONE LIKE ME... SOMEONE IN TROUBLE... AND DON'T GET ME WRONG, MURDERING YOU A HUNDRED TIMES THIS AFTERNOON WAS AS FUN AS IT LOOKED, BUT --

-- BUT I'M NOT AS MUCH OF A LOST SOUL AS HE MADE IT SOUND? WHAT CAN I SAY, I'M SELF-SUFFICIENT.



HOME. SOUNDS NICE. MAYBE I'LL FIND MINE OUT THERE SOMEPLACE.

BUT BE CAREFUL TRAVELING ALONE, MS. STRAUSS. YOU KNOW MY POLICY...

ABOUT SAFETY--

-- IN NUMBERS.



IT ALMOST MAKES ME JEALOUS. EVEN SELF-REPLICATING CON-MEN HAVE A FAMILY WAITING AT HOME.



BUT I WONDER WHAT'S WORSE-- NOT FITTING IN EVEN AMONG THE OTHER FREAKS...



OR BELONGING A LITTLE TOO WELL?

I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOUR GAME IS, SAMUEL. BUT I'M STARTING TO THINK IT'S RIGGED.

THE END